





Conversion:

A LETTER

TO MR. ALEXANDER CHIROL

AND HIS FAMILY,

ON THEIR HAPPY ADMISSION TO THE COMMUNION OF

*The Holy Catholic Church;*

AND ON SOME PUBLICATIONS TO WHICH IT HAS GIVEN RISE.

BY THE

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"Illud plane non temere dixerim, quod si quisquam fidelium fuerit anathematus  
injuste, ei potius oberit qui faciet, quam ei qui hanc patitur injuriam."

S. AUGUSTINUS AD CLASSICIANUM. Opp. tom. ii. p. 667.

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# A LETTER,

ETC.

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DEAR FRIENDS AND CHILDREN IN CHRIST  
AND IN HIS CHURCH—

Not because I think that you can want words of consolation or encouragement from man, do I sit down to address you. You who have been but just admitted into the fulness of spiritual joy, by the profession of that faith which alone worketh by charity; you who have so lately received the sevenfold gifts of God's Holy Spirit—the Comforter; you, in fine, who have been newly fed with the manna that refreshes and strengthens—the bread of life; you truly need not that any one should presume to mingle drops of human comfort with the tide of grace and blessing which has been let in upon your souls.

Nor do I write to you because your trials have been heavier than those of others who have trodden lately the same path as yourselves. For well do I know how grievous a tribulation many of them have borne; what scorn, what obloquy, what misapprehension of motives, what cruel suspicions; what sundering of old affections, what tearing of sacred ties, what estrangement from all that was dear; what losses of comfort, of station, of consideration—nay, of the very means of life. Well do I

know, and could recount, the domestic persecution and petty annoyances which fret and wear the mind and heart, because coming in place of coveted affection; and the still crueller and more unfeeling severities against the most helpless of victims, which have given to many who have embraced the faith a merit little short of what belongs to its holy confessors. And though you may have suffered in the things of this world, and in those, too, which are dearer to honourable minds than mere wealth, yet know I that you hold not yourselves better than your elder brethren, and that you consider all these things as but a light price to have paid for the incalculable blessings which you have received.

Nor is it, finally, because more outcry has been raised against you than against others who went before you, that I could wish, as it were, to take your part. It is true that when others, and many at a time, have joined the Church, they have almost been allowed to depart in silence; that when even one whom thousands revered, loved, and followed, and whom Anglicanism rightly counted among the best and wisest of its sons—when even he came to us, no one dared to follow him, like Semei, with bitter words; but thoughtful men watched his retreating steps with reverence: while you, for reasons too clear, have been pursued by a volley of scornful and intemperate speech, not merely shot forth in hasty anger, but persevered in through repeated editions, postscripts, notices, and replies, as though you had been chosen out for the prey of one who will hunt down his game, unrelenting, to the earth. But even for all this, you have consolations superior to any that my words could offer. As the Israelites, landed safe on the further shore of the Red Sea, could look in pity and security on the tumultuous confusion of their

pursuers, involved in the closing billows which they had escaped ; so must you needs feel nothing but compassion for those who, incapable (as yet) of knowing that safety and peace which you have reached, send after you their hostile cries, and upbraid you with your very escape from their own trouble.

It is not, then, to sympathize with you, or to give you human comfort, that I write to you. But it has appeared to me, that the course pursued in your regard contains lessons that should not be overlooked. Like the storm which bares the rocks to their bases, that before were covered, this outburst of anger has laid open to every eye the wretchedness and hardness, and perils, and inconsistencies of the system which it was intended to protect. And this should not be passed over. I do not intend to be systematic in what I write. I will content myself with noting down, as they have struck me, the evidences thus revealed of the feebleness and the uncatholicity of the peculiar formula of Protestantism of which Mr. Bennett has made himself the exponent.

And first, I think you cannot but rejoice at having escaped from a system in which the gravest and most solemn duties of a church are committed to the self-will of an individual, without control and without responsibility ; where the anger of man usurps the place of well-regulated discipline ; where the delivery of God's word may be converted at pleasure into personal and libellous attacks ; where the dispensing of the bread of charity (as is believed) may be preceded by the most flagrant violation of its first principles. For no one can be deceived in perusing Mr. Bennett's sermon. It is not the language of zeal, for zeal is charity, and charity is kind ; it is not the voice of the good shepherd, mourning over the loss of

a dear one of his flock; it is not the deep wailing of a priest sorrowful over the defection of his people; it is not the groan of a father over his Joseph devoured, or his prodigal departed. Alas! too clearly it is the outbreak of the anger of man, which worketh not the justice of God; it is the unmeasured wrath of one disappointed, thwarted, vexed at what he considers as a personal cause of quarrel. Throughout, this appears, not only in tone, but in the very form of argument used.

First.—But two years ago, when the English establishment had reason, if ever, to mourn over its losses, and to warn its followers against increasing them by imitation, Mr. Bennett preached a sermon “On the *Schism* of certain *Priests*, and others, lately in communion with the Church.” The sin of “priests” who *then* left the Anglican system was “schism,” but *now* it is a sevenfold greater one, named *apostacy*.

“I have *always* thought,” writes Mr. Bennett, “that the gravamen of the sin of which our priests are guilty in abandoning the Church of England is the *violation of their oaths*. Laymen have made no oath of office. In forsaking the church for the communion of Rome, they are therefore guilty only of schism. But the priests, when they forsake the church, are guilty of APOSTACY. And when I speak of Apostacy, I of course mean to consider as *implied* and *involved* in it the abandonment of the true doctrines of the catholic faith, and the substitution of erroneous doctrines in their place. But the *primary* charge is that which I have to deal with now. However great a sin schism is, Apostacy is, of course, sevenfold greater.”\*

If Mr. Bennett *always* thought thus, he did so, doubtless, on the twenty-second Sunday after Trinity, 1845. Then, how comes it that he withheld from his flock, on that occasion, this his important conviction? Instead of

\* Advertisement to Sermon on *Apostacy*.



it, we find him urging, as strongly as words can, the grievousness of the sin of "schism;" not, indeed, exaggerating it, for that were impossible, but striving to secure his people against it by detailing every aggravation of its heinousness. Had the guilt for which he wished to excite abhorrence been seven times greater than "schism," he surely would have felt bound to name it. Instead of this, "the priests and others" are equally charged with only the same sin—"schism." Nor can it be thought that Mr. Bennett wished to use lenient terms, and fall below the truthful standard of the guilt; for, in a note, he strongly protests against "the use of soft words to describe the sin of schism—such as 'secession,' 'departure,' 'going over;'" so that we cannot, in fairness, suspect him of using a soft word to describe the sevenfold greater sin. And he winds up the paragraph by the epigrammatic conclusion, "Let schism be schism."\* To which we may now add, "And let apostacy be apostacy." Whence any impartial person, comparing the two sermons, must come to this conclusion, that a priest leaving the "Church of England" is guilty, like a layman, of "schism;" but a curate leaving the Church of St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, is guilty of "apostacy;" and his guilt is sevenfold.

Secondly.—Again, comparing the two discourses: in the one of 1847, he considers it almost impossible that an Anglican clergyman could be guilty of the terrible sin involved in quitting his communion.

"But, alas!" he exclaims, "we cannot deny it. To us this awful lesson has come (let us speak of it in all the depth of sorrow) of a mind so lost and dissipated by perverse reasonings; with intentions, let us hope, meaning right, yet so obscured by mists and clouds of sophistry, as to have lost sight of everything true,

\* Sermon on Schism, p. 16. See Note A, at the end.

and honourable, and just; and to have plunged recklessly, and with a judicial blindness, into the depths of a sin, the fruits of which eternity can alone disclose.”—p. 9.

There is, indeed, here that miserable reservation of judgment on the intention, which in modern controversy is a pall cast over any mass of uncharitable imputation. But compare this language with the similar reservation on behalf of the “schismatics” of 1845.

“It is right to say, that I do not mean to apply these passages” (of the Fathers) “in disparagement of the *intentions* of those who form, as will be of course understood, the subjects of this sermon; particularly one, than whom, perhaps, no man, as far as we can judge, was ever more sincere, more single-minded, and more holy.”—p. 9.

What can have led to this difference not merely of tone, but of reasoning; to the finding of *necessity* mists, clouds, sophistry, sight lost of everything true, and honourable, and just, and the plunging recklessly into blindness, and the eternal depths of sin, in him who does in 1847 that which another could do in 1845, and yet be sincere, single-minded, and holy? Time cannot make the difference—it must be place. And the key to this will be found in the first of the cited paragraphs, in the words—“To *us* this awful lesson has come.”

Thirdly.—And do you, or does any cool observer, think, that had the case occurred in some other church, that had the object of this rude attack been the curate of some evangelical rector, and Mr. Bennett had been called to express his feelings on his defection, he would have been handled with any such severity? Would there not have been some pity expressed for the sensitive youth who sought refuge in Rome from a mutilated liturgy and a heterodox teaching? Would not the indignation have

been partly spent on those who tolerate these things? Hear his own words again:—

“It is not the case of one surprised into duties of neglected observance, or of witnessing practices abhorrent to Catholic usage; it is not the case of one forced into a position where the duties of the Church have been lost, where daily prayer is neglected, holy sacraments mutilated, the things of God irreverently handled, or the doctrines of the Church preached to the people with short-coming of their truth. It is none of these, but quite the contrary.”—p. 10.

Does not this give us just grounds to surmise, that the real “gravamen” of Mr. Chirol’s conversion was his leaving a church in which Anglicanism showed its fairest form? And does not the admission of this come plainly before us in one of the concluding paragraphs of the sermon, which is as follows?—

“That the world—the external world—will make much of this sad event, in depreciation of our endeavours to obey the Church in her highest calls of duty, and her purest forms of service, we must expect; that many weak brethren will flee away and be discomfited, not knowing what is the matter, we must expect; that those who are ignorant of the Church of England’s real doctrines and principles, will seize upon this event, and turn it into a vehicle of slander and obloquy, we must expect; that the enemies of the Church—infidels, dissenters, and others—will gladly point with the finger of scorn, and say: ‘See what comes of the teaching which you receive:’—that they will, in short, fasten upon this unlooked-for accident the imputation of a generally erroneous teaching, and a false bias towards Rome, *we must expect. It is for this reason that I now am speaking.* It is for this reason—namely, that I may defend both you and myself against the possibility of such a charge; that I may show you how entirely external and foreign to anything belonging to this Church, and my teaching, is the sin which we now deplore. And so let it pass away.”—p. 16.

Fourthly.—It is too plain, then, my dear friends, that

you have incurred the indignation of Mr. Bennett, by leaving the particular church which he directs. Hence his hot words; hence the sevenfold guilt of one of you. Let us see how this bears upon the religious system in which he is a minister.

It is not easy to discover what Mr. Bennett means by the Church. In the above paragraph we seem to have it under three aspects: first, "THE Church in her highest calls of duty;" then, "the Church of *England's* real doctrines and principles;" and lastly, "THIS Church and *my* teaching." That there is "a Church" or "THE Church" beyond the mere insularity of Anglicanism, a Church true in France and Italy and Spain (however corrupt Mr. Bennett may call it), to which the natives of those countries must rightly belong, he and all must admit, who either go back for it to the period antecedent to the division of East and West, or hold the theory of "branch-churches." This ideal church spread over the world receives the first homage of the high-churchman's heart. It is a happy fiction, on which he can meditate and talk without misgivings, in which he can profess belief when he recites his creed. Round it he clusters all the noble prophecies of the Old, and the promises of the New Testament; and all their realizations in early ages. It is the One, the Holy and the Catholic; it is the spotless, the unfailing, the impregnable; it is the pillar, the temple, the new Jerusalem, the spouse. But where is it? It is everywhere—in Rome for the Italian, in England for the British, in Russia for the Muscovite. It is true that each section teaches something which every other anathematizes, that each considers the other schismatical, or heretical, or corrupt. This matters not; the negatives and positives neutralize one another; the sharp and wounding points are rubbed off

by being shaken in the same category ; the condemnation of one makes it straight with the anathemas of the other ; accounts are balanced by mutual denunciations, and the result is, that the Italian is bound to be a Catholic, though his Church is supposed to teach him idolatry ; the Englishman is obliged, under sin, to be an Anglican, though Anglicanism may be a schism, and has lost sacraments and dogmatic truth ; and the Russian must be a Greek, even with a heresy that affects the Trinity. And all these discordant elements, which must not even think of further blending, form “THE Church,” the abstract idol of the high-Anglican divine. When he wishes to overwhelm the doubter with evidence, it is to this church of Ambrose and Augustine that he appeals. “Te per orbem terrarum sancta confitetur Ecclesia:”—the *orbis terrarum* Church with which the great St. Augustine always beat down the Donatists. If he desire to exalt churchmanship above dissent, and dazzle the mere Protestant into admiration of Church principles, he passes over the limits both of insular, and of insulated, England, to the times when Catholic unity bridged over her sea, and made her one with distant lands. It is the Church, not only of the martyrs and of the confessors, but of “Virgin Saints” and monastic fathers, that is extolled: nay, the very Borromeos and Teresas, no less than the Bernards and the Aquinases, are flowers of that glorious tree ; and the virtues of prelates, and the conversion of nations, and the noble productions of art and of genius, under whatever sun and whatever hierarchy brought forth, are all evidences of the Divine origin and heavenly destinies, of that one imperishable Church. Nothing is said *then* of the glories of Anglicanism: they talk of the great and holy men in the old English Church who built our splendid cathedrals—I have never

heard any one boast of "the Church" that built St. Paul's. They tell you of the Church which produced a Wykeham, a St. Edmund, a St. Wilfrid; not of that which brought forth a Parker, a Ken, or a Wilson. And why? Because they are speaking of "THE Church," that which is to overawe and convince the dissenter.

But Catholics admit all these noble evidences—they do more, they claim them. "The Church," in the imaginary form, will not do with them: it is "the Church of England" that next comes forward to demand allegiance. The Catholic, finding the *orbis terrarum* Church still in existence; discovering in it every sign of divine character which he had heard praised in it; seeing yet vigorous in it all the principles and the powers which called into being the virtues and the glories of men and of things attributed to it; clearly reading in it, too, every note of truth, broadly stamped upon its surface, but penetrating, like letters of fire, to its very core, Oneness, Holiness, Apostolicity, and Catholicity; seeing it, moreover, everywhere breathe with a life of reality that shows it to be possessed of soul, glow with a vital warmth which proves the presence of an informing Spirit,—the Catholic, seeing, possessing, feeling all this, naturally concludes that he is following out the very theory of "THE Church" into actual practice, in clinging to it by any skirt or fragment that reaches him, and holding fast to the communion of the past and the present, of the near and of the distant,—the Church of the World.

But no. Had it been his fate to be born across the Straits of Dover, he might have lawfully indulged in his holy fancies. As it is, it is his duty to belong, not to "THE Church," but to "the Church of *England*." Sacraments and sacramentals lost, liturgy and ritual defaced,

doctrines obscured or denied which he deems not only true but necessary, religious institutions overthrown, counsels of perfection unknown, intercommunion with living or dead forbidden—these and a thousand other defects he cannot brook. But he was born on this side of the Channel. Had his lot been cast on the other, he would have been not only allowed, but obliged, to believe in purgatory, and indulgences, and the Pope, and transubstantiation; because his bishop and his parish priest would have taught him them; but as it is, he is bound to deny all these doctrines, and abhor them as damnable, on the teaching of his present bishop and priest; and he is an “apostate” if he presume afterwards to believe, in England, as it is true to believe in France! Such is the theory of the *second* Church—that “of England.” When thus put forward, it becomes pure and apostolic, having in it every means of grace, and every ministration of life—it has unity, antiquity, succession of orders:\* nothing is wanting to it. By a few easy substitutions, the national establishment is invested with all the prerogatives of the *first* Church, and is spoken of as though no other existed on earth.† Schism, which is a rending of Christ’s seam-

\* See Sermon on Schism.

† This running of one Church into another will appear in other parts of Mr. Bennett’s sermon. Thus, when, to enhance the solemnity of orders, they are represented as a compact with the Church, it is “to the Church we are married and become a husband, and stand, as it were, like our blessed Lord Himself, by the side of His spouse; ever holy, lest we defile Her—ever faithful, lest we deceive Her—ever true, lest we forget Her.”—p. 6. [The capitals are Mr. Bennett’s. It is not easy to divine how, at the moment of ordination, the candidate stands *ever* holy, &c.] Here is clearly the universal Church—the spotless Spouse of the Lamb—as it is described in the same sentence, “the whole,

less garment, yea, of His very body, means no longer a separation from that universal Church, to which such a symbol would naturally apply, but a secession from the national establishment. This consequently becomes the seamless garment, in spite of what Mr. Bennett must know to be endless rents and tears, divisions and animosities,

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wide, expanded area of God's CHURCH." It is to *this*, that the priest is married by orders—how, then, is he guilty of apostacy by leaving one part of this area and going into another? Has he not been married to the Roman portion as much as to the Anglican? An ingenious transition, in the next page, bears the reader over the difficulty:—"But further. In Holy Orders,—  
 "there is not only this *abstract* self-dedication, this *general*  
 "vow and covenant made of the body and the soul to God's  
 "service as His priest; but there is, also, in the Catholic Church  
 "throughout the world, and so agreeing in the Catholic Church  
 "of England, specific forms and oaths, to which, before the  
 "laying on of hands, every priest is pledged. Every Church  
 "has her canons, and articles of faith, and rules of discipline,  
 "—to these the hand is subscribed and the oath is sworn that  
 "he will abide faithful and true to them."

So that all this grand espousal to the CHURCH was only something *abstract* and *general*. The Catholic Church throughout the world, and the Catholic Church of England, are now most skilfully severed, and apostacy consists in leaving the latter Catholic for the former Catholic Church. Both are Catholic; but one is "the Catholic Church *throughout the world*," the other, the Catholic Church *only* of England! What a contradiction in terms! Well might we ask—Why should *all the world* have a single Catholic Church amongst them, and England alone have a "Catholic Church" all to itself? Does Mr. Bennett mean that each national church may exact, under oath, subscription to articles which all the others may pronounce false, and that it is sinful to believe with any Church but your own? and yet these contradictory churches form only one Catholic Church! Either this, or there are two Catholic Churches, one for England, and one for the "orbis terrarum."



regarding the very essentials of faith ! This is the body, one and inseparable, though composed of teachers and disciples who differ on such subjects as baptismal regeneration, the power of absolution, the real presence, and the very divinity of our blessed Lord !

Let us, however, suppose that some unfortunate Catholic were to be so far prevailed on by Mr. Bennett's strong declamation, as to consider it his duty to abandon the communion of "the Church throughout the world," in favour of the Anglican system ; let us imagine him to communicate his new impressions to that gentleman, as he might justly do, in some such words as these :—" Sir, you have convinced me that I must become a member of the Church of England. I have, at least, gained one privilege by the change—that of a comfortable latitude. Whatever doctrine I may feel inclined to follow, or whenever I may be disposed to change my opinion on matters of doctrine, I am sure to find a clergyman somewhere in the English establishment who will be my teacher. At present, I am a parishioner of St. ——'s, the clergyman of which gives them communion only three times a-year, appears on the platforms of every evangelical society, says the prayer before Wesleyan missionary meetings, and strongly denies baptismal regeneration. He studiously avoids all ceremony, uses the surplice as little as possible, rejects the offertory, and cuts down the services. Following him henceforward as my heaven-appointed guide, he being, of course, duly licensed by the bishop of the diocese, I shall be but little burthened with doctrinal or liturgical responsibilities ; but shall keep the easy tenour of my way, beneath the wings of that considerate Church, which allows such pleasing varieties within her pale."

Would Mr. Bennett, think you, approve of this view ?

and yet could he deny the facts on which it is based? Then what would be his reply? Surely, that “it was distressing to see in ‘the Church of England’ such lamentable short-comings as his convert described, and such awful deficiencies in faith in some of its appointed teachers; that bishops would have to render a fearful account to God for the errors and the abuses which they permit; but that, thanks to His mercy, the true teaching and ministrations of the English Church were not extinct; that there were places where her beautiful liturgy and her orthodox doctrines were fully carried out,—such were, perhaps, Margaret Chapel, or Christ Church, St. Pancras, and he might add, St. Paul’s, Knightsbridge,—where daily service, rubrical niceties, weekly communion, and sound views of the Articles, would be always found. That it was the duty of the convert to fly from the heretical teaching and profane worship which he had so justly described, and seek in one of these strongholds of orthodoxy a place of rest.”

In other words, to such a one, it would be no longer “the Church of England” in its totality that would be held up for admiration or obedience; it would be, “this Church and my teaching,” that would become its representative; and thus the universal Church would, step by step, be reduced to the narrow limits of a congregation worshipping in a particular place; and the awful homage due to her and her teaching be reduced to the truly Protestant standard, of regard and obedience to a single man.

Let us put this clearly to the test. Ask Mr. Bennett, or let one of his parishioners ask him, whether or no he would entrust the management of his congregation, and the teaching of his pulpit, and the ministry of his altar, for a single year, or for six months, to any bishop of his own establishment—to the Bishop of Durham, or of Nor-

wich, or of Hereford, or the Archbishop of Dublin? Now they are more truly representatives of the Anglican communion than he is; they are its shepherds, its fathers, its rulers in God. Yet no one can know the peculiarities of Mr. Bennett's views, without feeling assured, that conscientiously he would reject the uncontrolled rule of his little flock by some of those chief pastors, for a lengthened space of time, were illness to compel his temporary retirement. And why? Because it is no more "the Church of England" than "the Church Catholic" that is the idol of a high-churchman's adoration, when once he is in practical power: it is "this church, and *my* teaching," that engrosses his worship. He is censorious on all around; he blames, he condemns, he denounces the teaching and the practice of those who come not up to him: or, what is equivalent, he bewails, and humbles himself for, the sins of "the Church of England." He is not merely its priest; he is invested with the prophetic office, which overclothes and supersedes the priesthood; he threatens woes against its prevarication, or he weeps over the broken walls and the desecrated temple of his Jerusalem. At one time it is the scourge, at another the sackcloth: he strikes and he rolls in ashes; always in zeal for the sanctuary, or for the sins of his people. The tendency of the system is to create supremacies, and to erect far more than one papacy in these realms. With a ready cry on the authority of the Episcopacy, on Apostolical succession, and the sin of schism, never were the true rights of bishops more completely despised and set at nought, and never was dogmatism more boldly assumed than by the leaders of this party. Mr. Bennett does not hesitate to call "Holy Orders" a "sacramental rite;" and yet he knows that his articles, which he, as well as Mr.

Chirol has subscribed, reject that doctrine. He may explain away and refine upon the matter; but he knows as well as any one that the simple, straightforward, and *commonly received by his own bishops*, interpretation of those articles is against him. Mr. Bennett calls on you to go to confession to him, and be taken to the bishop for absolution. "To *me*, let him be told, he is bound to come and confess his sin!"\* Ay, to *me*, to *me*;—*that* is the Church! As if, in any age, the Mother Church would have been guilty of such cruelty, as to enforce confession (if necessary) to one who seems to exult in the very idea of holding a lash over his penitent, who invites him by reproaches bitter as gall, and tries to win him by holding him up to public scorn! No, dear children, with all your hearts thank God that you have been rescued from the bondage of a step-mother that can do this, that you have escaped from the cruelty of a system which can hold out only such terms of forgiveness; in which the shepherd of the flock goes to the high places of the city and cries aloud to every passer-by, to tell them that one of his flock has been guilty "of gross *ignorance*, of gross *hypocrisy*, or of gross *levity*:" that he is "an Apostate," a seven-fold greater sinner than a schismatic; that he has "trampled under his feet and scattered to the winds, as so much child's play, and cast to the dogs" something too sacred to be here repeated; that he has "lost sight of everything honourable, true, and just; that he has plunged, recklessly and with a judicial blindness, into the depths of a sin, the fruits of which eternity will alone disclose:"† that he has broken an oath; that "under the unruffled

\* A Reply, &c. p. 15.

† Does this mean that it is a sin for which there is no means of forgiveness? If not, what *does* it mean?

exterior of one serving in the fold of Christ, there lay (in him) the lust after the accursed thing, and the spirit within was giving the lie to the words and deeds without;” that he was “a traitor,” and had “committed an act of apostacy most glaring, indecent, and fearfully treacherous in the eyes both of God and man:” and that he had been “a public violater of oaths;” and much more to the same purpose: in which, not so content, this appointed shepherd may have the indecency even to drag those before the public gaze, to be objects of scorn, whose age or sex would have shielded them from any rage but that of wounded religious vanity;\* and after thus doing all in his power to blight, to ruin, and to crush the feelings, the heart, and the prospects of a whole family, has the heartlessness to tell them, exultingly, that to *him* they must come and ask for pardon by confession! “To *me*, let him be told, he is bound to come and confess his sin!” No: such a refinement of cruelty, thank God, you will not find in the Catholic Church. That he who has been guilty of one of the most wanton acts of spiritual butchery upon the very lambs of his supposed flock, who has rent open the very breast, and pretended to read there its hidden lust, (assuming His office who alone searches the reins and heart,) whose words have been arrows, and whose tongue has been as a sharp sword driven to their very hearts’ core; that *he* should offer to undertake, upon those his victims, the gentlest, sweetest office of God’s ministry, the binding up of the wounded, the healing of the broken of heart; that *he* should coolly propose to them to handle their sores, and pour into them the oil of soothing words, the wine of consolation, to

\* “Let his wife, let his mother,” &c.—Reply, p. 15.

whisper into their ears promises of mercy, bend over them as a mother does over a sick child, mingling tear with tear, and making their pain and affliction his own, extenuating rather than aggravating, fearful lest sorrow should kill; nay, that he should allow them no alternative of pardon except through *his* combining in his person these two most opposite characters—is a profanation of the pastoral office “so glaring, so indecent, so fearfully treacherous in the eyes both of God and man,” that it makes one shudder but to contemplate it. And had Mr. Bennett been a priest in the Catholic Church, and had thus first publicly assailed the character of his parishioners, and then as publicly called on them to confess to *him*, a severe rebuke would have been the slightest penalty that would have befallen him.

But I feel that I have allowed myself to be carried away from the matter in hand. Mr. Bennett, I began by observing, insisted upon confession to him; and yet he knows full well, that a few months ago, a young clergyman at Leamington was not only reprovèd, but deprived by the Bishop of Worcester, for inculcating and practising confession.

It is, in truth, a fact too notorious to need mention, that the leaders of this party, or *ἀπεστis*, in the Anglican establishment, heed but little the wishes or the opinions of bishops, nor even their jurisdiction. They go from diocese to diocese, taking on themselves the guidance of the consciences of others, whether personally or by letter, without the slightest regard to the views of the immediate minister of the parish or diocese: they solve their doubts, prescribe their penitential acts, absolve them, nay, go bondsmen for their very souls, staking their own salvation to keep them back from the Catholic church, with a boldness that savours

of desperation, and an assurance that claims infallibility. This autocracy into which what is commonly called Puseyism has degenerated or grown up, (for there are morbid growths as well as ulcerous cavities in an unsound state of body,) which began by prostrate submission to the episcopate, and has ended by utter recklessness of its wishes, is thoroughly displayed in Mr. Bennett's sermon. But the most amazing exhibition of it, he has given to the world in a more judicial form. I allude to that celebrated "Notice," promulgated by him and his friends in various ways, and now printed at the end of his sermon. So long as gentlemen of Mr. Bennett's class amuse themselves and others, by innocent imitations of Catholicity, so long even as they pretend to handle the keys of the Church, we may look upon their acts with the complacency of hope, trusting that they may be led on to the desire of realities, with the shadows whereof they have become enamoured. But when they rashly lay their hands on the awful thunderbolts which she commits not to any but the strongest hands, and but to be rarely and awfully employed; when, like children playing with edge-tools, they wantonly thrust and hit around them, with more danger to themselves than to others, and that "without a word of ecclesiastical denouncement,"\* it is indeed "a demonstration of discipline destroyed," which fills every calm beholder with wonder and dismay.

In that extraordinary document, Mr. Bennett takes upon himself to excommunicate Mr. Chirol, with what in the Church would be called the "greater excommunication," makes him an *excommunicatus nominatus*, one excommunicated by name. Mr. Bennett may say that he did not ex-

\* Mr. Bennett's decree of excommunication was formally sent by Mr. C. to the Bishop of London.

communicate, but only made known an excommunication *latæ sententiæ*. But this is the same thing: to promulgate and to proclaim the application of such a sentence, and pronounce that its outward effects must take place, belongs only to the highest authority. In his own establishment, Mr. Bennett knows, or ought to know, that excommunication belongs exclusively to the bishop; and once more I call upon you to thank the merey of God, for having drawn you out of a system in which such wanton assumption of the most awful powers is permitted with impunity to any angry man. In the Catholic church, no one could have been thus excommunicated, except by the bishop, and that not without a triple previous denouncement and intimation, with earnest calls to repentance. The excommunication of Napoleon by Pius VII., is one of the rare instances of the use of a power which a perpetual curate here arrogates: how different the actors and the occasions!

But Mr. Bennett knows, no doubt, his powers and his place; and he, perhaps, explains them in a casual phrase in his sermon, where, with some levity of phrase, he describes the awful sin of Mr. Chirol's "apostacy" as "the strange evolutions of one set over you by MYSELF *and* your bishop." Mr. B. first, and then the Bishop!

In the Catholic church, you will find none of these anomalies, no congregationalism, no autocracies, no individualism. Whether you attend the solemn celebration of the adorable Sacrifice under the dome of St. Peter's at Rome, or kneel before a turf altar in an American wigwam; whether you hear Father Ventura preach to the youth of Italy, or Father Mathew address the men of Ireland, you may be sure that you have the same unmutilated services performed, and the same pure doctrine taught. If you hunger after the Bread of Life, and wish



to make it your *daily* (not your *weekly*) food, you need not ask whether at such church or chapel there be daily service, but you may go to any, with the assurance of there assisting at the liturgy of St. Peter, and partaking of the heavenly gift which it prepares. It is not there the work of individuals to “carry out”—such is the phrase—the Church’s offices and rubrics ; but the local Church is merged in the national Church, and the national Church in the universal Church, in an ascending, not a descending order ; the lesser is at once typical of the greater, each in degree, and yet forms part thereof : as the crag, or as the peak is part of the mountain, having, perhaps, some outlines of its own, but rooted and imbedded immovably into the total mass, one in substance, in origin, in structure, bearing the same plants, and watered through the same veins. The parish priest does not profess to have more accurate notions of his Church’s doctrines than his neighbour-priest, nor to do more in liturgy or in doctrine than he does. He teaches what the bishops of his country teach, and to them he looks up, as his guides in orthodoxy ; unerring, not because infallible, but because inherent, by intimate communion in an infallible Church. For they, in their turn, do not presume upon national independence, but hold fast to the faith of the Church Catholic, and of its divinely appointed Head. Thus every one from the individual looks up to a higher point, a guidance superior to his own judgment, (which the judgment of merely another man needs not to be ;) each advance gives a stronger moral security, independently even of a Divine promise ; and the Church becomes truly the mountain set upon the top of mountains, communicating at its summit, like Sinai, with Heaven itself. The faith which she delivers is as a coin of refined gold, that circulates everywhere of the same weight and value, not

clipped by low-church "short-comings," not adulterated by the admixture of high-church "views;" not worn down smooth by worldly and courtly handling, nor stamped anew with the image and superscription of self-appointed reformers.

Fifthly. Having thus seen Mr. Bennett's theory of the Church as betrayed in his sermon, I will now, my dear friends and children, call your attention to another explanation of his theological views, which is calculated to startle any one but slightly versed in that science, and to give you new motives of gratitude for having been freed from past bondage. The whole of his sermon goes far to deny the existence of grace. And, first, negatively. Mr. Bennett minutely describes all that Mr. Chirol did to bind himself to the Anglican establishment: and the whole amounts to a contract with *it*; not the slightest allusion is made to a Divine grace bestowed. Ordination is described as a mere act of adhesion on the part of man to "the Church;"\* put perfectly on a level with sign-

\* I must own my inability to understand Mr. Bennett's peculiar technology. A few examples will suffice. Of Baptism:—"Thus the Christian sets to his seal by the font, and God sets to his seal by the Spirit, and the Church sets to her seal by the water." (p. 5.) What is the distinction between "the font" and "the water"? Does the former mean the material font as distinct from its contents? If so, or in any case, what *does* the whole passage mean? Of Orders:—"That which baptism and marriage is (*sic*) to the individual, holy orders is to the Church," (ib.) The natural meaning whereof would be, that Holy Orders does for the Church what the other two rites do for the individual—*i. e.* baptism cleanses the individual, marriage binds him to a companion, therefore, Holy Orders effects something similar, not for its recipient, but for the whole Church. Again of Orders:—"Holy Orders is the taking up of our individual baptism, and becoming baptized in the baptism with which Christ was bap-

ing the articles, and taking the oath of abjuration, and some other oaths, having a pulpit assigned, and a flock committed to him. Mr. Bennett's whole labour is to prove that a series of acts has been gone through, which "hems a man in on the right hand and on the left," (p. 8.) and leaves him no escape. And "the people," what do they believe of all that has been done? That a minister is come to them, full of Grace and of the Holy Spirit, through the imposition of hands? Oh! no. "So the people, *in the reciprocal faith by which all things are mutually considered between man and man*, without a question believe in what they see and hear," (what is that?) "and rightly argue"—no man can be prepared for what follows—"that because men cannot swear by a greater, they have sworn by God," (ib.) The only pledge, then, of security

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tized, '*blood*,' and drinking of the cup out of which Christ drank '*tears*.'" (p. 6.) What does "taking up," mean? How do orders "take up our individual baptism?" What other sort of baptism is there besides "individual baptism?" How, in Holy Orders, are ministers "baptized in blood," more than at any other time? How do they "drink tears" on that occasion? I doubt if more enigmas could be found in any other one sentence. Again: "Holy Orders is the taking up of our individual marriage, and setting it aside as nothing," &c. What if one has not been married before ordination? How is our "individual (?) marriage" to be taken up, and then set aside as nothing? In St. Augustine's favourite phrase: "*Quantum sapio, quantum capio, quid est hoc?*" The whole sermon abounds with similar *nebulae*, which *may* be lucid to the initiated, but they are not to us of the old theology. As an instance (out of many) of careless expression, take the following, the very first sentence of the sermon: "... Just as in the human body, the fibres, *muscles*, and nerves, by which the actions of the limbs are regulated, are imperceptible." When a man's frame is said to be *muscular*, this surely does not signify abundance of that which is imperceptible.

for a flock in its minister, is the reciprocal faith between man and man; and all that the former argue, when a new curate is sent them, is—"that because men cannot swear by a greater, they have sworn by God!" Were not this solemn nonsense, it would merit severe rebuke. Now, my friends, in the Catholic Church the case is far otherwise. When a priest is sent to a new flock, its members are far from looking to the mere reciprocal faith, as it is "between man and man," for security in his teaching; nor do they think of believing merely what they see and hear, (such is not *our* ground of faith:) but they know that he is appointed to teach them by a Bishop, who is bound to see that their new pastor has been well instructed in sound theology, and is free from all suspicion of error; and they know that the Bishop himself has been named, after due assurance of his perfect orthodoxy, by the Universal Church, through its Head. Secure in all this, the people never inquire, nor seek to know, how many oaths the young priest has taken, nor how many times he has subscribed formularies, nor by whom he has sworn. If they did, they would be sadly disappointed as to these great guarantees of orthodoxy, according to Mr. Bennett's estimate; for neither oath nor subscription is required. But the people know something better; that the priest set over them has received the Sacrament of Holy Orders, and with it the fulness of the grace of his office; the grace of God's guiding Spirit to preserve him in the Faith; the pastoral grace to enable him to direct the consciences of others; the grace of sacramental prudence, which "hems in" the secrecy of the confessional better than oaths; the grace of fortitude, which has lately enabled one Bishop and twenty-five priests, mostly in the prime of life, to sacrifice (and hundreds of others to risk) their lives in

attending their flock through contagious fever;\* the grace of sacerdotal unction, which fills the priest's hands with blessing, and enables him to drop grace and benediction into the senses and hearts of others; and lastly, so to speak, the grace of Grace, by the power given over its very source, in the daily oblation, and partaking of the unspeakable mystery of grace. It is from conviction that the priest is validly and lawfully ordained and sent, not that he has made a compact with the Church or with his flock, that the faithful confide in him, and unhesitatingly commit to his youthful ear and heart the secrets of their guilty breasts. They believe in the safeguards of grace, not in the bond of many oaths. But this view does not seem to enter into Mr. Bennett's theology.

But still more, and positively, does his theory virtually deny grace. Through the whole of his sermon, he never looks at a religious change, or conversion, as by possibility other than a growth of conviction, through inquiry and knowledge. It was not to be expected that, looking at Mr. Chirol's happy change, he should consider it an act of grace. But he does not contemplate the possibility of this view being held by any one; he argues in the abstract, that any man having bound himself by oaths, cannot, under any circumstances, be justified in leaving that to which he has bound himself. Mr. Bennett's reasoning is clearly this. Society is founded on FAITH, by which his illustrations show that he means, not divine faith, but what we commonly call good faith. Men mutually trust

\* Such has been the loss in England; several have died in Scotland; and many others have caught the infection, but have been mercifully spared. In Canada, one bishop, twenty priests, and ten sisters of Mercy or Charity, have fallen victims to their charity, in attending Irish emigrants.

each other in all the affairs of life, &c. On this principle, Mr. Chirol bound himself to the English Establishment by ordination, by subscription, and by sundry oaths. By leaving the system to which he had pledged himself, he has violated his oaths, which constitutes—not perjury—but apostacy. This reasoning will apply to a Wesleyan clergyman who should suddenly leave his ministry and join Anglicanism; or to the early converts to Christianity, as well as to Mr. Chirol. No doubt, the Pharisees made good use of it, when St. Paul was known to have reached Damascus, a Christian in heart, after charging himself with their commission, to preach up Judaism. But Mr. Bennett himself shall speak to this point:

“Be it granted that the Church of England is false, and that the Church of Rome is in this country true. Be it granted, for an instant, that we are wrong in our doctrine, deficient in our sacraments, wanting in the apostolic succession, corrupt in our discipline,—yet this falsehood, this error, this want, and this corruption existed quite as much in April last, when the oath was taken, as in July last, when the oath was broken. There could be no long course of study, deep meditation, or struggling prayer, ending in slow conviction, that all the preceding stages of the process of holy orders, the oaths, and the subscriptions were erroneous—*in two months*. We do not change our faith or our Church as we do our clothes. We are not, if we are of the Spirit of God, to be found one month in the ministration of the sacraments of the Church of England, and the next—without a word spoken to a brother—at once to be transformed into worshippers of the sacrifice of the Mass.”—p. 12.

Mr. Bennett, therefore, acknowledges—first, that his reasoning on Mr. Chirol’s guilt is irrespective of the truth or falsehood of Anglicanism; it is as powerful on the hypothesis that he is wrong in doctrine and deficient in sacraments, as on the supposition that he is right. Further, he considers that, under any circumstances, the shortness of

the time elapsed between taking the curacy and abandoning it, materially enhances the guilt. As he elsewhere observes —“It is the case of an *oath* deliberately assumed in one month, and, without the slightest shadow of a change in the circumstances which surrounded the oath, that oath violated within a few months after.”\* The supposition of any merely interior change does not enter into his calculations. Now, on one side of the hypothesis, at least, there is grace to be considered; and Mr. Bennett’s reasoning should have been thus: “‘Be it granted that the Church of England is false, and the Church of Rome in this country true,’† and then, indeed, all is plain in Mr. Chirol’s case; for the grace of God might then draw him from the false to the true, and the operations of grace have no necessary relation to time. On the contrary, the change of heart which it effects is often instantaneous, and its inspirations cannot for a moment be disobeyed, nor its impulses resisted. *Nescit tarda molimina gratia Spiritus Sancti*, says St. Ambrose. ‘Be it therefore granted, for an instant, that we are wrong in doctrine,’ &c., and then, whether Mr. Chirol had joined the Roman Church the very day after his subscription, or ten years after, he must have done right, for in *that* hypothesis he must be supposed to have been led by the Spirit of God. But,” &c. Mr. Bennett may fill up as he pleases the other supposition; but it is clear,

\* P. 10. Here is another specimen of Mr. Bennett’s peculiar phraseology. The case is that “of an oath taken in *one* month;” we naturally expect, as the apodosis, “and violated the *next*.” As the sentence stands, it might as well have been said, “in one week,” or “in one day.” Of course, an oath must be taken in some “one month.”

† How can the falseness of a Church depend upon the country in which it exists? Are the truth or error of doctrines questions of geography?

that by putting both sides as leading equally to the same conclusion, he casts aside completely the theory of grace, and its action on the soul.

Sixthly—But, under any circumstances, Mr. Bennett was bound to make allowance for inward *conviction*. Let it be remembered, that he has publicly rejected all claim of infallibility for his establishment. “In regard to the power vested in the Church”—these are his words—“for ordering its affairs and pronouncing on its doctrines, we both” (Rome and England) “agree together, that there is this power vested . . . but then Rome immediately advances, and says, this power is *infallible* . . . while we say, every Church may err.”\* Therefore, the Anglican system *may* be wrong, and its rulers can never say to their disciples, you are secure from error by remaining with us. If there be no outward security against error, the inward security is all that can be expected. So long as a person is inwardly and conscientiously convinced that by adhering to that system he is free from grievous error, he must remain there. The moment that conviction ceases, and the contrary assurance takes its place, joined to the certainty in his mind that the Roman Church is right in her claim to infallibility, it may be an act “of gross hypocrisy or gross levity” to remain a moment longer in the position occupied, but certainly it cannot be either, at once to leave it. Mr. Bennett does not seem to admit the existence of any internal change ; so long as the outward circumstances remain the same, nothing can pass within the heart, nothing can change opinions and convictions. He exacts from all who would be his curates, not merely uprightness, but immutability ; not only sincerity at the time that they

\* Lecture-Sermons, 1842, p. 30.



subscribe their formularies and undertake their office, but unchangeableness for the future. If they ever change, it is a clear proof that they were not sincere!

But let us now put a not improbable case. Let us imagine a young Anglican clergyman, who has become disgusted with the appearance of his religion in its ordinary exercise. He has been ministering amidst empty pews and desolate altar-rails, under a cold rector, who cripples the services, discourages all enthusiasm, prefers a basin to a font for baptism, and a gown to a surplice; leaves his fine old church to the owls outside and to the spiders and rats inside for six days in the week, except while the flues are being heated on Saturday afternoon. Damped in his ardour, crushed in his hopes, he thinks the abomination of desolation is standing in the holy place, and turns his steps Romeward, meditating the while on the glorious services of the Apostolic Church, and the unity and peace of its disciples. But his career is arrested by learning that he has not yet seen or known the beauties of Anglicanism. He is drawn into new influences; the leader of the religious movement assures him that in the establishment may be found all that he longs for in the Catholic Church, forgiveness of sin and peace of heart, penitential observances and ascetic contemplation, fulness of doctrine and beauty of worship. He hears of churches where all this is taught and observed; he thinks he has now found at home what he was going to seek abroad—a harbour, a shelter, a resting-place on earth. What wonder if he should address the head of one of these favoured spots, and “solicit from him, with more than usual earnestness of entreaty, the office of curate in his parish.” His doubts for the moment are set at rest, his heaving breast is lulled into a calm. A holy work of zeal is before him: the

Church (so he deems it) which he loves, appears decked in her majesty at his side—his bride, his spouse; and “*exultavit ut gigas ad currendam viam*,” he starts on his course with a bounding heart, and with a simple faith that now his anxieties are ended, and that he shall share the glory of reviving and reburnishing the faded splendour of God’s neglected temple. So far from being insincere, his very heart is on his tongue as he pronounces “the oaths of office,” and he would that his blood, instead of ink, could sign his faithful submission to the articles.

And yet a few months have hardly elapsed, and he has sunk into new wretchedness, perplexity, almost despair, and he is found once more turning his eyes and his feet towards the peaceful realms of Rome. And what will the world say of this? Precisely what Mr. Bennett fears it will say in the present case, that it has all come from “a false bias towards Rome,” given by the teaching and practice of this doubly reformed Church. It will say, “See what comes of your Romanizing in doctrine and in worship,—of your preaching up sacraments, the real presence, sacerdotal absolution, fasting, and works,—of your high views on priestly authority and apostolical succession,—of your daily service and weekly communion, and observance of saints’ days. These have been so many steps on his way to Rome.” But no; the world would be, as it generally is, wrong. The truth would not be with the many, who talk; but with the few, who think. These would know that it is the disappointment, tenfold embittered, of generous hopes wound up to the highest pitch, that has caused the disgust, and led to its natural result. Even where he had fondly trusted to find a church full of life, and of vigour, and of power, he has discovered, on trial, that all is hollow, unreal, and unsound. The staff, on

which he has been taught to lean, of apostolical authority, proves a broken reed, which, besides letting him fall, will pierce his hand. Let doings at Exeter and in London prove this. He will have to hear episcopacy wonderfully extolled, but the episcopate as wonderfully censured. The very bishop whom he is taught, in the abstract, to revere he may be told not to follow in doctrine, as unsound. He hears much of the power and exercise of absolution, and attempts it; but while a few more generous or devoted souls will apply for it, he sees the poor in flocks gather round the confessional of the Catholic priest, in fulness of faith, crying out for forgiveness. He finds his ministry among the masses of the ignorant, the depraved, and the wretched, powerless and flat; they respect him as a kind-hearted gentleman, who is very good to go among them, and no doubt they will take due advantage of the circumstance; but they open not their hearts to him as a priest, they warm not towards him as a father; they send not for him at the hour of death. He hears of hundreds departing without absolution or viaticum; they care not for them at his hands. In other words, he soon discovers this most crushing truth to a sensitive and zealous heart—that the establishment in which he ministers is not the church of the poor, is not the religion of Christ's little ones. A select congregation, a fashionable audience, pious and liberal followers, nay, much devotion and charity among the rich, will not compensate for this loss. Moreover, the services to which he had looked forward as fraught with stately majesty, are but sapless and tasteless in their monotonous repetition; and the attempt to throw ceremonial forms over their bare and dry observances, is little better than to cast a purple robe over a skeleton or a corpse. Daily service will be attended

by a few who have leisure; but what a contrast with a church in France or Belgium on a week-day morning! Saints'-days may be observed, yet how few will care about the saints! But, after all, in what does all this end? Why, in the practical conviction that all that *is* done—and it is little enough—is the work of a single man, not of the Anglican system; it is an individual creation, an artificial garden in the midst of a waste or common, a spot pointed out as *contrasting*, not as *according*, with the spirit and workings of that very system all around. He has weighed and tried Anglicanism in its highest forms, and it has been found wanting. Is it wonderful if he *now* abandons it?

That the efforts which men, devoted, like Mr. Bennett, to Anglicanism, are making, to raise its character and position, lead many to the Church, there can be no doubt; but it is not, as the world may judge, by gradually raising their views—it is by disappointing them: it is not by familiarizing their senses and minds with Catholic forms and ideas, but rather by *proving* to them, without leaving room for further hope, that these can have no reality in connexion with Anglicanism, nor out of communion with the Catholic Church. The experience of many past conversions will prove this. Instead, therefore, of Mr. Bennett's wondering at such a change occurring under his ministry, and without any variation in outward circumstances, he ought to learn that inward conviction may flash in a moment on any of his flock, and that their conversion may follow, from the very means which he is employing to retain them. The grace of God, to speak Catholic language, may overrule his attempts to prop up Anglicanism, for its very overthrow in the hearts of many. Let him not be surprised if your example be soon followed.

I will now draw this long letter to a close. Be not moved by what has been done in your regard, further than to pray for him who has thus pursued you with reproaches and excommunications. May the day be near, when he, too, shall see even as you have seen, and re-embrace you as brethren in the bosom of a common mother. Bless the Lord your God, who has mercifully delivered you from the bondage of a hard and unkind system, as well as of an inconsistent and unsettled creed. "Laqueus contritus est," you may well say, "et nos liberati sumus." If you have been cast out, as were the Apostles from the synagogue, you have been received within the Church of the whole world, you have entered into the fellowship of countless holy brethren, and have on you the blessing of the Vicar of Christ, the successor of St. Peter. You now can say, "I believe in the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints," understanding the purport of every word, in simplicity of faith, in assurance of hope, and in fulness of charity.

Begging from God every blessing upon you and yours,

I am ever your sincere friend

And affectionate father in Christ,

N. WISEMAN.

*London, Dec. 1, 1847.*

## NOTE A, p. 7.

It may be well to notice more minutely the evidence here given of Mr. Bennett's progressive advance in severity, notwithstanding what he says of his having *always* thought as now.

First.—On the 22nd Sunday after Trinity, 1847, Mr. Bennett preaches that “a priest” going over to the Catholic Church is guilty, not merely of “schism,” but of “apostacy,” a sevenfold greater crime.

Secondly.—On the 22nd Sunday after Trinity, 1845, (the coincidence is remarkable,) Mr. Bennett taught the same congregation that the sin of “priests” so joining the church was “schism,” and *only* schism, because he was particular about giving the sin its right name. “Let schism be schism.” He says: “In the same way we may observe of the use of *soft words* to describe the sin of schism, such as ‘secession,’ ‘departure,’ ‘going over,’ and the like. Such is *the fault* which I have endeavoured to describe in a letter to the *English Churchman*. I think it most essentially behoves us to *call things by their right names*.”—Sermon on Schism, p. 16.

Thirdly.—In 1842, Mr. Bennett delivered certain “Lecture Sermons,” and, in a note to the first, writes as follows: “Professing opinions at variance with the Church, he (Mr. S.) *seceded from her*. . . But let the reader observe that Mr. S., in *going over* to the Church of Rome,” &c.; and at the close of the sentence, Mr. S. is again said to have “*seceded*,” (p. 19.) The whole note is curious, but not at present to our purpose, which is, to show how Mr. Bennett has committed the very fault which he censures, and has not called things by their right names, but by exactly the wrong ones, which he reprobates.

I conclude, therefore, that, according to Mr. Bennett's teaching,—

First.—In 1842, a clergyman's leaving the Anglican establishment was “seceding,” or “going over.”

Secondly.—In 1845, it was wrong to describe it by these terms, but it was “schism.”

Thirdly.—In 1847, it was not right to call it “schism,” for it had become “apostasy.”



